

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY  
REMARKS EN ROUTE TO MADRID, SPAIN, FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.  
SEPTEMBER 28, 1994

Q. Instead of an opening statement, maybe we can just get a couple of questions in since we're about to land. How about Bosnia -- the problem of Bosnia now that the United States is not going to go ahead with lifting the arms embargo at the request of the Muslims -- how do you bring pressure on the Serbs to come round? Are you going to start more closely enforcing the exclusion zones? How do you bring bring pressure on them to...

SECRETARY PERRY: There are two different forms of pressure that can be put on the Bosnian Serbs at this point. The first is the continued and more vigorous application of the NATO air strikes to be used whenever they either attack any of these safe haven areas, Sarajevo and Gorazde, for example, or if they harass the U.N. peacekeeping forces on the ground; both of which have happened several times in the last few weeks. More generally the use of NATO air power prevents them from taking advantage of their heavy weapons advantage on the ground and gain military objectives they might otherwise want to gain.

The second point is that the cutting off of supplies, especially military supplies, from Serbia is going to have, I believe, a profound effect on the Bosnian Serbs. They're embargoed in other directions already. The supplies have traditionally been coming in through Serbia. That cut off is the most significant development. We have to watch very carefully to see how complete that cut off is, but it seems to me very clearly that the Serbian government, Milosevic in particular, is prepared to put substantial pressure on the Bosnian Serbs in Gorazde in order to get them to accept the peace plan. That is the new element in the picture.

Q. How about restoring water and power to Sarajevo? Any pressure going to be brought on them to do that?

SECRETARY PERRY: We'll be discussing that in the context of the U.N. resolution which prohibits what's called the "strangulation" of Sarajevo. To the extent that that is seen as an act by the Bosnian Serbs of attempting to strangle Sarajevo, then it will be an appropriate vehicle for counteraction including the use of NATO air strikes.

Q. In your talks with the Spanish, are you going to discuss the Mediterranean security issue and the possible sale of aircraft to the Spaniards?

SECRETARY PERRY: We will let their interests dictate the discussion to a certain extent, but I certainly believe that the Mediterranean security will be very high on their interest and I'm going there prepared to discuss it. I think they'll probably want to discuss the sale of aircraft, too, and I'll be prepared to discuss that. I don't see myself as an aircraft salesman though.

Q. What is going to be your message to the European ministers you're going to be speaking with regarding Bosnia, keeping troops there vs. not, lifting embargoes vs. not, and that sort of thing?

SECRETARY PERRY: I think the first message is that we ought to have a unified (inaudible), stick together, keep the Contact Group together. The allies not in the Contact Group ought to be supportive of that. So I'm going to be trying to bring the allies and the Contact Group together. I had a meeting with General Grachev yesterday for the purpose of keeping the Russians and Americans together in the Contact Group. That's one big message. The other is pursuing these two remedies that I talked to Charlie about a moment ago.

Q. How can the United States and other NATO countries, but especially the United States, help these Southern flank countries in the problem of Moslem fundamentalism? Are we talking about intelligence -- you're certainly not going to go bomb Algeria?

SECRETARY PERRY: A variety of means, but intelligence is one way. Confidence building measures to joint peacekeeping exercises. We're making a major shift and we will be discussing this in the NATO meeting of shifting our activities in Partnership for Peace, our exercises and training, down to the Southern Mediterranean. Joint peacekeeping exercises in those countries are good confidence building measures.

Q. You mean the Southern flank countries or the North African countries?

SECRETARY PERRY: I'm talking about Southern flank countries, but they're the ones that are the most concerned about the North African countries posing security threats to them, posing certainly refugee and immigration problems for them.

Q. On the matter of Haiti briefly, does the sacking of the food warehouse by thousands of Haitians, according to a story I read before we left, does that give you any worry as far as...

SECRETARY PERRY: I don't have a detailed report on it yet. But just based on the preliminary reports we have, it is a matter of concern. It's not something that we will permit. Part of our job is to ensure that there's not a breakdown in law and order and that sounds like one. So we will have a responsibility to be sure that the police functioning there, both the Haitian police and our oversight of them, prevent those sort of things from happening.

Q. Do you think that will be alleviated somewhat once you start getting more aid in there, once...

SECRETARY PERRY: Absolutely, absolutely. A combination of bringing up -- improving the effectiveness in the size of the fleet functioning down there, plus bringing on more humanitarian aid. Both of those are solutions to that problem, I believe.

BREAK IN TAPE

SECRETARY PERRY: We'll have a discussion on the NATO meeting to or from Seville. I expect that's going to be a significant meeting. As you may recall, these NATO defense ministers meetings are held twice a year and this is the informal one. This is the one that corresponds to the Travemuende meeting last year where the Partnership for Peace was introduced. We look at this meeting as being less bureaucratic, administrative, and more thinking and I think Bosnia is going to be the issue that they're going to be focused greatly on in terms of immediate issues. The Southern flank is going to be the new idea as to what can NATO do to deal with the problems -- all NATO countries, but particularly those countries that fringe on the Southern flank. Since we're having the meeting in Spain, you can be sure there's going to be a big interest in the issue. In my meetings in Italy and Greece and in Turkey, of course, all of those questions are front and center in their mind.

Q. Is there any difficulty, Mr. Secretary, in terms of reconciling the President's announcement on the embargo issue with the Nunn-Mitchell law that basically now -- the law of the land or about to be the law of the land?

SECRETARY PERRY: I think -- you're talking opinion on this, John, but if we have a not just a policy, but we have actions underway; we seem to be supported by our allies; and which look like they're driving toward a peace plan, I think we can get by (inaudible) It seems to me when they put laws like that on the books, it's out of frustration. They want something to happen that's not happening. This meeting then in NATO will be crucial for seeing if we can get an agreement on a unified course of action. Consistent with what the President said and consistent with the goal of having that peace plan in effect in some sort of reasonable amount of time in the future.

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